

## Strengthening Humanitarian Aid: The Role of NGOs' Social Media in Disaster Relief Campaigns

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### Abstract:

In recent years the frequency and intensity of natural disasters have increase worldwide (Seneviratne et al., 2024). Pakistan has also been hit by severe floods. The Catastrophic floods of 2022 has been a huge disaster. These floods have killed thousands and displaced millions of people. In such disasters mainstream media and especially social media can help and support the affected people through campaigns, information dissemination and aid appeals. Social media has made a remarkable contribution in recovery and rehabilitation in disaster management (Yigitcanlar et al., 2022). It is used to support people in need of food and medical care and to organize relief activities for them (Krichen, 2024). Humanitarian aid organizations use social media in engaging public, communication and fundraising (Lee, Lim and Shi, 2024) . Though during these floods, government, international organizations and agencies have helped in rehabilitation and recovery operations but the role of local NGOs has been pivotal as they were not only active in collecting aid through campaigns but also delivering relief operations. This research is a case study analyzing the effectiveness of aid calls through social media by local NGOs in response to damages of 2022 floods. These NGOs include Saylani Welfare Trust, Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP), Alkhidmat Foundation Pakistan, JDC Foundation and The Citizens Foundation (TCF). This research is an exploratory study where data is collected through interviews from communication departments of local NGOs to analyze how people reacted to these calls and did it help in collecting more donations for the affected people. Moreover, the social media handles of these NGOs are also analyzed to know their reach and aid campaigns during the flood days.

As this is a working study, we have collected preliminary data and conducted some interviews. The initial findings indicate that social media is a fast medium through which people gain awareness about various causes. This awareness, in turn, drives individuals to make donations and contribute to funding efforts. Social media posts spread rapidly and have a vast reach, enabling organizations and causes to engage a wide audience in a short period.

The theoretical lens used in the study is Diffusion of Innovations Theory, according to which new ideas and innovations spread within a social system. In the context of social media, the fund-raising campaigns which emphasizes the posts about charitable causes spreads rapidly and is viewed as